The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Leonard J. Trinterud:

Jerusalem Revisited

G. Ray Jordan • Peace on Earth—When?

Theodore A. Gill • The Bible *Is* Brass Tacks

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JOHN W. MEISTER • WHEN GOD SPEAKS

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Prayer

At Christmas Eve Service

O THOU who art the lover of every person, receive us in knowing patience, for we seek thee now through such varying moods. Many of us are near exhaustion from the frenzied effort to please and be pleased; others come with lives that shelter little but stark loneliness; some are filled with the warmth of knowing that they are well-loved; others bring the pain of precious memories that make the present seem barren. And all of us in some sense anticipate glad reunion with a certainty that is well-known and yet new.

So, we come—together—seeking a quiet moment fit for sighs that are deep and filled with the silence that overwhelms. We would that the manger setting encourage us to look for meaning in the obscure, that the candlelight impart to us a listening awareness, that the music sound the depths in us that resonate with thy depth. Here in a holy moment, O God, may the birth of Jesus be known to us as thy love transparent, appearing—unafraid and in vibrant joy—to greet the needing world. Amen.—*Edward W. Warner.*

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

LUME XXIX | DECEMBER 1958 | No. 12

Memo:

URELY no one has yet forgotten how Charles Clayton Morrison used to handle his impor- t page in this journal. Each month he wrote agraphs on the event of the month, the book of month and the thought for the month. I have said before that such a division of the page was a natural, and one that commends itself to this Memo-writer more each nth. I'm still reluctant to set my version of such ormat down beside our Founder-editor's tradi- n of excellence. But one of these months I'm ng to give the tripartite design a whirl.

But how will I settle on the subjects? What, for tance, has been *the* event of the month in which vrite?

A few days ago there could have been no doubt at the event of the month was the furor around awarding of the Nobel Prize for literature to Russian poet-novelist-scholar, Boris Pasternak. e circumstances need hardly be recalled. Mr. sternak was already in Russian disfavor because his novel *Doctor Zhivago* which was (1) openly tical of the repressions, deceits and inhumanity Russian communism, and worse, (2) which had en smuggled out of Russia and published in many anslations all over the West although suppressed home. Then came the Nobel Prize, immediately terpreted as a political slap in the face by the ssian leaders who poured contumely and invec- e on the trapped author. Pasternak was kicked t of the writers' union, put under armed guard, reatened with exile. He accepted, then rejected e prize. His countrymen hound him still.

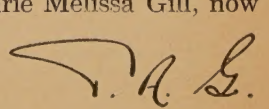
The event leaves three questions for me. First, what errant stupidity could the Russian policy akers—who must have initiated the "get Paster- k" policy: there is *no* spontaneity in a totalitar- nism—have insisted on proving so publicly that erything Pasternak said about them was right? he smashing of an author on the second anniver- ry of the bludgeoning of Budapest produced a milar horror. The repression of a Russian mind as less bloody than the murder of Hungarian pa- iots, but it was exactly as brutal. And it certified asternak's truth.

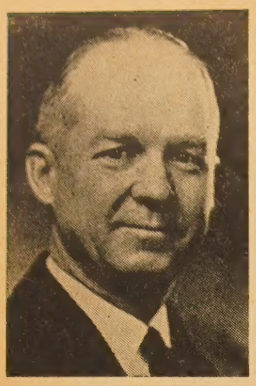
The second question left for me is about the oint or purpose in any longer defending the differ- ice between fascism and communism. Very sophis- cated theological commentators have insisted all ong that there is a decisive difference, and the enefit of the difference is all on communism's side. Now in the abstract that may be well and good. But doesn't an event like the affair Pasternak make such distinction more and more abstract? When confronted with totalitarianism do basic philosophic differences make any real difference at all? If states act alike, what difference does it make how differently their theoreticians talk? Remember, the only other time a Nobel Prize has been rejected, German pacifist Ossietsky was forced to the humiliation by the Nazi government.

My third question is harder to ask. In all fairness it probably ought to be more an observation than a question. But is it not striking that the principal voices raised against Leviathan's inhumanity in Russia, Poland, Hungary have not been those of theologians or preachers but of poets, novelists, artists? Oh, a cardinal here or there objects, but usually in the aggrieved tones of devested interest. Many ministers suffer, or are silent, or suffer in silence. But who sparked the Polish resistance, who set off the Hungarian revolt, who wrote *Doctor Zhivago*, who speaks for man? Out loud. Artists, artists all. No wonder the church is learning again to value poets and dramatists highly. They may not see the truth more clearly than theologians but they say it more plainly than we do, with all our pastoral inhibitions and our institutional responsibilities. We must at least *wonder* out loud: Set the protesting Russian-Jewish novelist beside the silent Czech-Reformed theologian, and which, speaking for his trapped creatures really speaks for the Creator?

I began by observing that it would be hard to choose *the* event in a month like this one. Crowding the Pasternak incident for significance would be the election returns just in at this writing. What a temptation to expatiate awhile on them, working them into the list of evidences I sketched last month for the end of the Era of Good Feeling. Surely the election's story of an increasingly impatient electorate would fit as one more straw in the brisk head winds which are making much brusquer going for the church already. But don't let me get going on that again. If I did, I know I could not long resist listing Liberace's quarrel with his mother as the crowning evidence of the end of something or other. *Liberace*, with his *mother!*

How pick the event; how balance your objectivities? You choose the issue this month. Everything inside tells me that Laurie Melissa Gill, now two weeks old, was our event of the month. Lovely Laurie, lovely event, lovely month.





Peace on Earth—When?

By G. Ray Jordan

"GLORY to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This thrilling anthem, which angels sang for shepherds as they kept watch over their flock in the field near Bethlehem, has deeply moved millions of people. Now, during this Advent Season, multitudes are asking quite sadly: "Peace on earth? When?" The question certainly is in order. For this year every serious-minded devotee of Christ who thinks of Bethlehem is greatly disturbed.

We are remembering, to be sure, that if conditions are not too critical on Christmas Eve, the government of Jordan will doubtlessly permit thousands of visitors to cross over from Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt for the purpose of making their annual pilgrimage to Bethlehem. The Hashemite Kingdom gave its sanction to this kind of travel in 1957. The tragedy, however, is that after some forty-eight hours of "armistice," the pilgrims will have to return and the barbed-wire barriers will still be standing!

While all this is happening in Bethlehem, hosts of Christians around the world will be singing Phillips Brooks' hymn of adoration and praise: "O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie." The more discerning, however, of those who try to join in the music will not be able to free themselves from the fact that Bethlehem is no longer a place of peace. Our singing about great joy does not change conditions there. We do not have enough good will among people in the Middle East or elsewhere in the world to guarantee peace.

Ignore Disagreeable Facts?

If someone suggests that we should not think of such depressing conditions during Christmas, the answer is that our failure to consider these facts properly in the past has made it impossible for our world to enjoy a real Christmas in 1958.

Even deeper is the fact that the stars which sh over Bethlehem the first Christmas Eve were all brighter because of the darkness of the nigh Judea and Galilee. Indeed, we know that the s of hope and faith always shine more brilliar against the blackness of despair.

So, against the background of the alarming he lines in our newspapers concerning conflicts in Middle East, we read Luke 2:14: "Glory to Go the highest, and on earth peace, good will tow men." The serious troubles were beginning whe visited Bethlehem for the first time in 1933. At t time, however, as people anticipated warfare, it primarily a matter of talk. For Great Britain parently had things well in hand. There was Palestine, not Israel and Jordan. Thus we rode l than six miles in an automobile from Jerusal and were in the Church of the Nativity in a sh while after leaving the Holy City. In 1951, as v true this past summer, we could not take the sh way. It was necessary to ride twice the distance order not to cross over into Israel. This was anot reminder that the present bitter feeling betwe Jordan and Israel is more pronounced than that the Samaritans and Jews of Jesus' boyhood.

Journey to Bethlehem

That is why we stop to look again upon the thousands of refugees near Bethlehem who fled fr their homes some ten years ago during the warfa between Israel and Jordan. They are part of t nine hundred thousand who left their villages a farms during the war and now have no chance reclaim their homes. Some of these can lo across the narrow border of no-man's-land th separates them from Israel and watch other peop tend the soil which once belonged to them. The needless suffering indicts every Christian who lus ily sings at Christmas: "Peace on earth, good w toward men!"

Certainly we know that Bethlehem, a city tha set on a hill, should give light to the world. It r minds us of how the light of heaven did shine o the night of Jesus' birth. The town is still set on hill! Thus its very prominence calls to mind the pe plexing problems as yet unsolved. The reason? Mo of us prefer singing about our religion instead facing the demands of our faith.

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All this is in our minds as we pass by the Shep-ds' Field, where we hear a young Arab piping tunes. Our imaginations take us over the cen-ries to another lad, David, who doubtlessly used same kind of musical instrument and played a nilar tune.

As we enter Bethlehem, a woman passes us. essed in native costume, she is carrying a jug of ter on her head. Her chief concern is caring for e welfare of her family. She may have walked ne distance to secure the water for use in her me, just as women did in Jesus' day.

Oldest Church

We feel a sense of awe as we approach the Church the Nativity. We recall its history. Following an peal of his mother, Helena, Constantine built the iginal Basilica in 330 A.D. It was the Emperor's amatic way of declaring he had become a Chris-n. The present church is conceded to be the dest one in the Christian world which is still used r worship. Fortunately it has survived the many vasions of the Holy Land.

Interestingly enough, there is no broad or high wer to give this church dignity. It does not, how-er, need either! It has been built over the place here Christ was born. In the humility of the Di-ne—and the Incarnation is nothing less than that! there is sufficient dignity and majesty.

As we enter the low door, our guide reminds us is only four feet high. Thus those who come to e church are forced to bow in adoration. There e, to be sure, other explanations but the one our rab friend offers is more than thought-provoking. e remember that to the degree we bow in adora-on before Christ will the Divine Spirit bring peace earth and good will toward men.

Our attention is arrested and our imagination irred by the presence of the cross in numerous aces in the Church of the Nativity. Three apses the church give the building the form of a cross. hile descending to the grotto on the lower level—hich the guide points out is the birthplace of hrist—we note a cross in the bronze door. It eaks eloquently of the distinctive difference in the fe and character of the baby born here nineteen ndred years ago.

Because poor people still live in caves over the cky hillsides, some of us find it easy to think it as a grotto like this one in which Jesus was born. s has been suggested, this would certainly give lary more privacy for the great hour in her life. hat was particularly important when her young dy was in pain, her enquiring mind seeking an-vers to searching questions and her heart hunger-ig for that peace which only God can give.

When we descend into the grotto the incense and e many lamps tended by priests do not trouble s. For we are excited as once again we fasten our aze on the silver star which tradition says marks e place of Christ's birth. Even as the shepherds ame to worship him, so do we want to fall before im in devotion and adoration. For us he represents od. Standing quietly in meditation, we know that eace can come to our distraught hearts and minds and to our confused world only when the attitude, spirit and character of the One born here nearly two thousand years ago controls us.

We are pained, therefore, when we see evidences even in the Church of the Nativity of the divisions of Christians. Three groups control this holy place: the Latins, the Greeks and the Armenians. Constantly irritations and disagreements are arising among them.

Some years ago when Greek Easter came, the Latins, who observe Easter on another day, came to the Church of the Nativity to hang a picture. As has been suggested, they were obviously afraid to surrender any right to a rival sect on their Holy Day. There followed a "free-for-all." Among those who were pitched out from the church was a gray-haired bishop.

With embarrassment we are reminded of a story concerning the three nails and the pillar which divides the Greek section from the Latin. On one of the nails the Greeks had hung their tapestry. The Latins hung their tapestry on another. The central nail was considered "neutral." One day when the Romanists complained that the Greeks had hung their tapestry on the central nail, a governmental investigation was necessary. Finally pledges were given by both groups. These commitments to an "armistice" were signed by both groups.

Walking out of the Grotto, we pass through the room in which St. Jerome spent a quarter of the fifth century translating the Scriptures into Latin. We are in the quiet of worship once more but not for long! Leaving this holy place, we are once more pained by the conflict between Jordan and Israel.

Fear of War

At the moment, however, the tensions of Lebanon are uppermost in our minds since only a few days previously we had left Beirut. We could still envision the sandbagged buildings, the grim faces of soldiers patrolling the streets. The curfew had compelled all of us to be in our hotel by eight in the evening. After our departure from the city, fighting had broken out in the streets between Moslems and Christians.

Having so recently traveled in many "hotspots" of the world, we are forced to think of men's misunderstanding and hatred of each other. A few days later we were in Egypt. Here the Arabs loudly proclaimed that they would run the Middle East! So, in Jordan and Israel, again and again we listened to the accusations of those in sharp disagreement.

In these places communism is capitalizing on the widespread anger, distrust and frustration. The mistakes of our Western World are magnified by clever propaganda. Then, too, there is always the threat of the H-Bomb. Facts like these hang like a heavy pall over our minds. Certainly "the hopes and fears of all the years" have met once more—in the form of a cross.

But then we suddenly realize that the experience of which the cross is a symbol can change fear into

(Continued on page 17)

The Church Must Someday Come to Face Its Own Unsolved Spiritual Crisis

JERUSALEM

I HAVE chosen for this address the title, "Jerusalem Revisited," because that is what I tried to do in my spare time this past summer. I tried to see what this "New Jerusalem" of the New Testament looked like in its American setting. I tried to see what the church looked like on a cross section. Thanks to the now widespread custom of holding two or more services on a Sunday morning, together with what is left of the custom of holding Sunday evening services, I managed to get to two services on most Sundays and occasionally to three services on a Sunday. None of these churches, however, were willing to give me any credit or rebate on what I had put into the collection plate an hour earlier at another church, and twice I was unfortunate enough to get into a church which took up two collections in one service! Most of the churches which I visited were the downtown churches of our larger American Protestant communions located in five eastern and midwestern regions. To be sure, that is no very exhaustive sampling of our American Jerusalem; hence I shall try to be modest in recording my impressions.

The first thing which strikes you as you go from church to church Sunday after Sunday is the obvious prosperity of these churches. New buildings, additional buildings, complete renovations, new equipment greet you everywhere. Even churches which are in problem areas seem able to secure from denominational boards and agencies help for improving their buildings and equipment. Financially our American Jerusalem is evidently doing very well. It would be interesting to know just what is the total value of church property in the United States and just what is the full annual income of all our American churches. I think the figures would surprise us all. It is no wonder that European churchmen who are so often critical of Ameri church life are repeatedly amazed at what American churches have been able to do with financial aid from the state.

Attendance at church services is likewise striki Almost every church which I visited this sum was having good attendance and some were enjoy a remarkable increase in attendance. Whether not a larger percentage of Americans are attend church now than were doing so ten years ago I not know. But churchgoing seems to be much m popular now than it was a while ago.

While, therefore, boom and expansion were m apparent in the churches which I visited, the sa could not often be said for their neighborhoods like to walk and so whenever possible I walked church, which frequently meant going two or th miles through the city by one route and returni by a different route. It is appalling to see in t way, on foot block by block, that which is happe ing to some of our most famous American cities a parts of cities. The only sight worse than that wh thus greets your eye is what you do not see fro the sidewalk. A half a block from the house in wh I roomed for some time this summer were "home which smelled so badly that instinctively you hu ried past them. Yet across the street stood an o and once-prominent church and four blocks awa rose the majestic dome of the national capitol.

Just how many of our American churches are l cated in such situations I do not know. But I sa a good many this summer which were, and far mo than I had expected to find. Some of our most f mous American preachers are preaching today in l calities which some of us would call slums, thoug no doubt Professor Chakerian and his colleagu would see differences which escape the eyes of t untrained observer. But to bring together and t guide a Christian church in such communities mu be a difficult and exacting kind of ministry.

Another thing which strikes the eye of a visitor i the rapidly enlarging program of our America churches. The range of the activities of our churche and the ingenuity and effort which are required t carry on these programs are amazing. Bible-stud groups, missionary groups and such programs ar now paralleled by language study classes for ne citizens, recreational activities, community get-to

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By Leonard J. Trinterud

REVISITED

her parties, playground activities for children, ial activities for youth, coffee hours after church d so on. It is hard to evaluate such programs rely from seeing them listed in a church bulletin. wever, opinion as to their value is evidently not iform. This summer within a few days I read two wspaper reports of religious meetings. One report d of a sociologist who had denounced these bur- ning church programs for making mere country bs out of our suburban churches. In the next re- rt another sociologist had urged that our city urches provide many more such community serv- s as part of their plain religious duty.

Coupled with the growing prosperity of the urches I visited and with their enlarging pro- ams, there was quite obvious also a growing pro- sionalism about it all. Everything was to be done ight. That meant everything must be in the nds of trained people. As one businessman said me some time ago, and he said it without bitter- ss, "You know, the staff here carry everything so autifully that there isn't much left for us church icers to do." No one seems to be crusading against e notion that volunteer lay help should do things t the growing passion for efficiency, for achieve- ent, for more activity, is pushing aside the volun- er in favor of the professional. The members of the urch are becoming increasingly the clients of the inisters and when people speak about what the urch is doing or should do, usually they have in ind the work of the ministers and other staff mem- rs. Their own sense of being themselves a part of at living community of Christ among men has rophied. Many of them frankly say that the urch is the rather unreal world in which only reachers can live. For the ordinary man life must e quite different. So, according to some statisti- ans the "active" church member attends church out twice a month. Only during these two hours er month does he have much sense of being a part the Church of Jesus Christ.

One can see in church after church the effects of is situation upon the ministry. In countless ways, vertly or unconsciously, the ministers of the church e struggling to make the church and its services ore meaningful to the rather vaguely religious ngregations whom they serve. The numberless ac- vities into which our pastors plunge, of which Professor Samuel Blizzard has made us all even more aware, are only a part of this attempt on the part of our American pastors to make the church somewhat more meaningful to professed members of the Body of Christ. So also the increasing trend toward a more elaborate liturgical church service is a part of this attempt to make "church" mean more to church members. In almost every church I visited this summer liturgical changes and experiments were under way. Some of these changes and experiments were close to ridiculous but all of them were intended to make church attendance by the ordinary man an impressive experience. The current debate on evangelism, which occupies American churchmen from coast to coast and of which I heard a good deal this summer, likewise grows out of this realization that being of the church means very very little to a good many church members. The Methodist Church held a large national conference this summer in Washington, D.C., on the problem of evangelism and the World Council of Churches held an international consultation at Bossey in Switzerland on the subject recently. The task of evangelizing church members or professed church members was called the primary task in all these discussions. Billy Graham likewise calls the evangelization of our church members our greatest problem.

Our situation then is this: We are in a period of rapid expansion in the American church which is not being accompanied by an increasing depth of Christian understanding and commitment. Those who rejoice in what is called our current religious revival or revival of religious interest, have in mind this rapid expansion in membership, public interest, popular approval, etc., all of which are so evident on every side. Those who deplore or criticize this increased interest in religion and in the church point to the shallow character of so much of American popular religion. But the American pastor is caught between things worse even than the devil or the deep blue sea. Everyone expects him to make his congregation increase in size, to get his people to expand their buildings, their budgets and their activities. Yet how to do all this and still to lead their people into that deeper kind of Christian understanding and commitment which a time like ours demands is

more than many of our pastors find it possible to do. Some of them tell you frankly that they have lost the sense of doing anything important or significant. Others tell you they would like to move to another church where the situation would not be so frustrating. Some simply break under the strain. To be sure, many also perform miracles and do good work under impossible circumstances. But I talked to no pastor this summer who did not show the effects of this crisis which comes as the church grows in size and shrivels in its soul.

The preaching which I heard this summer reflected clearly the troubled mind and heart of the American pastor. The concern for people and for them in their problems was foremost in nearly every sermon I heard. But almost equally plain in every sermon was the sense of frustration, of working in a vacuum. The desire to be helpful was genuine in the pastor and so was his sense of the people's need. But what kind of help to offer to his people was not always very clearly apparent. The minister was struggling to make the service more meaningful to his people, but was himself often vague as to what the gospel, the church, the Christian life should mean in a time of change, strife and confusion like ours. Only once did I hear a crusading sermon on social issues such as were so common fifteen or so years ago. Only four times did I hear a sermon which even tried to deal with a biblical passage. Most of the sermons I heard in churches of several different denominations were "problem sermons," sermons which took up some problem of contemporary life. Again, almost every one of these problems was a personal and individual problem rather than a public, civic or social problem. The sermons dealt with the problems of personal security, personal adjustments, worry and the like. The typical pastor was trying to meet the religious needs of his people by presenting Christianity, or the church, as a help in the living of modern life. But the living of modern life was the beginning and ending place. Religion was a help toward something different or even alien. Whether I was in a church of liberal background or in a church of conservative background, there was little evidence of any conviction that the Christian gospel, or the Christian church, stood for any so-called Christian cause, or Christian way of life. The church was here to help all good causes, and primarily to help people in their problems. The churches were supporting many truly worthy causes, but without any great sense of having a cause of their own, much less a cause which transcended the many personal causes of their members, or the clashing causes of our social, political and economic groups. The idea of a "Christian cause," a "Christian ethic," a "Christian life," a "Christian claim," a God who called you and demanded something of you, were missing from most of the sermons which I heard this summer.

The results of this "religion will help you" approach are evident on every side. One younger minister with whom I talked this summer described the consequences very well. "The terrible thing about our situation," he said, "is that we shall soon have to ask the people of this congregation to make decisions and to do things which would strain the utmost the Christian grace and character of congregation." "But," he went on to say, "the religion the people have ever heard of is a relig which supposedly helps them, which works them." In other words, what this young pas rightly saw was that the desire to make relig helpful can be carried to such an extreme tha destroys the very souls of men. It makes them completely self-centered that no cause beyond th own concerns can ever reach them. God becor an Aladdin's lamp which you rub when you w something. But if God should ever command a thing, then religion would become a burden o handicap. You can preach peace-of-mind, secur and religion-will-help-you until you have litera and actually destroyed your people. You have them to their death by fostering and deepeni their own egocentric drives and concerns. Y feed the cancer in them which the gospel wou eradicate.

It should be evident to you all by now that I s and learned little in my wanderings this summer b yond what is already rather common knowledge only saw for myself what you have seen and wh you have read about in such different publicatio as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The Reporter*, *T Christian Century*, or *Christianity Today*. I thi we must agree in large measure with such criti of current American church life in so far as they t to make us more aware of the flabby self-centere ness of much of our popular religion. But I do n think that we can agree with them all the way, f they would place the blame or locate the cause our failures much too far away from themselve Moreover, they would ignore in far too cavalier fas ion the actual good change which has come about the American religious scene. All that any fift year-old theologian or religious writer needs to c in order to realize graphically how great is th change, is to recall the state of the Christian churc in his university or college days. It was simply i conceivable in 1933, just twenty-five years ago, tha the American church would ever again find eithe that welcome or that respect or that opportunity i American public life which it now enjoys. Not all c this change is due to the American religious intell gentsia. Much of it is the fruit of the less tha perfect work of the hard-pressed American pasto

Since we are here this morning in the complet safety of an academic situation, I suggest that w now leave the American pastor for a moment an confess our own academic sins. It is at least generation since the news rolled slowly across a astounded continent that over in Germany or Switz erland or somewhere a wild man by the name o Karl Barth was trying to prove that all the gains o 20th century scientific theology were mere piffle The liberal theologians were horrified and so were the conservatives. So much so, that in the survey course in theology which my generation had in a conservative seminary, two classic sentences were devoted to the whole crew of the new theologians

(Continued on page 23)

r Living Men
hen They Are Most Alive

The Bible *Is* Brass Tacks

By Theodore A. Gill

I DON'T know how it is in other parts of the country, but out where I grew up we have a phrase which means everything practical and specific and to the point. When one gets through stalling around, killing time, putting off—when one finally gets focused on a project and started on it, we call that "getting down to brass tacks." And this is considered a very good thing. It is interesting, amusing to busy oneself with peripheral concerns, extras, hobbies, side-interests. But when all is said and done, it is getting down to brass tacks that really counts. Everything else is just fooling around, finally. What matters is being practical, bringing all the faculties to bear on the problem at hand and pushing through on it as efficiently as possible.

Now, what brings all this to mind is the fact that in December comes Bible Sunday, a day set aside to honor and especially to emphasize our Christian Scriptures. I wish sometime they could put Bible Day at some other time than Sunday. Too many people have the idea anyway that the Bible is a book for the day of rest, that it is meant to be taken up and honored only when everyday living and working is done. It is a thing of beauty, it is a comfortable thing to have around, it has aesthetic value, sentimental value, moral value, religious value and all these in abundance—but aren't all of them, after all, the frills of living, concerns to which we turn our attention when the serious job of keeping alive and doing our work is over for the day or week? By and large, during the week we keep our noses to the grindstone, we get down to brass tacks. Then respite comes, when the week end brings surcease from efficiency and practicality, then we can turn gladly, gratefully to the beauties and comfortable assurances of the Bible.

It is hard to see how anything could be more wrong. The Bible is not a frill, a fanciness, an extra added attraction. It isn't for after hours or week ends. The Bible is about what matters most, it speaks to the times when we work hardest, try hardest, suffer most. It is about living men when they are most alive. It is all important to the way we live—and what is even more important—to the way we die. The news the Bible brings is not an extra added attraction for living—it is the main feature. We do not put the Bible aside while we get down to brass tacks and then pick it up later when we can let up a little. Not at all; the Bible *is* brass tacks. It is all about what we all are about.

Character Misunderstood

The biggest single reason why we have lost the sense of the Bible's immediate and urgent importance to everything that we do, is that we have misunderstood the character of the Bible. We so revere the book for its word of God, that we stand in awe of everybody and everything in the book. We put all the Bible characters on pedestals, and then because *we* do not live on pedestals we figure that those characters can't have much to do with us in our everyday living. So we save them—read about them when we're not busy. And then the whole tone of the Bible is so elevated, we have to wait till the day's work is over before we can rise to that biblical level in spare-time meditations. Isn't that the way we figure? The Bible people are so godly as to be divine—and so, rather beyond and above our work-a-day hum-drum. And the Bible is so much about the good as to be just a little goody-goody. On both counts the Bible is still something to be read and discussed but for both reasons it is pretty distant from the practical, everyday urgencies which are our first concern.

If that is your attitude on the Bible it is high time—it is past time—that someone disabuse you of a total misconception. The people in the Bible are not godly. They are not even very good, many of them. They are people—they were people before they were Bible people, and they are still people though now they are in the book—good, bad and indifferent, all people. There are heroes among them, of course, but none such as should overawe us, none who were stand-offish in their perfection. For they weren't perfect, not one of them. One hero killed a man in his wrath; another lied and cheated his brother; a third sent a friend to certain death so he could be an adulterer with that friend's wife; another denied his Lord thrice. They were

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just people. If the cast of biblical characters has seemed formidable to you by reason of the spiritual stature of the actors, you can snap out of that idea right now. The men and women in this book are not, by and large, spiritual giants so many cuts above us as to make their experience foreign to our own. They are right down here in the same ruts of sin and anxiety and discouragement with the rest of us. Figure them in when you're getting down to brass tacks. They know what your problems are because they were theirs. And just maybe they will be able to suggest some possibilities you haven't even seen.

No Ivory-Tower Mediators

The same line must be taken on the writers of the Bible. Don't shunt this book off for your abstract and ivory-tower meditation because its authors were abstract, ivory-tower meditators. That they were not. Why, most of these writers weren't even writers. If they hadn't been laid hold of by something, Someone greater than themselves, if they hadn't been as enflamed and enraptured as they were by what they saw happening between God and the world, they probably would never have penned a word, any of them. Oh, the psalmist probably would have scribbled some ditties—that poetic gift would have had to have come out. The playwright who did Job might have done some other drama. Luke might have made medical notes in some permanent, settled-down practice. But even so, these authors were not primarily writers, though some could write; these authors were not primarily philosophic nor even religious scholars, though a few of them knew a lot of philosophy and religion. Instead, the writers were a shepherd, a doctor, a king, a farmer, a historian, a poet, a fisherman, a government agent, a priest, a lawyer and so on.

Americans, you know come as near worshiping education as any people that ever lived. And at the same time, no one has ever been as suspicious of the results of education as are Americans. A mortarboard hat in a cartoon is a sure laugh; a professor is always on the edge of ludicrosity; Brain-Trusters are evidently the worst thing that ever happened to this country. Well, if some of this native suspicion of literary elegance and academic achievement holds you back from figuring the Bible into your most common living, then give another think. For this book is no Phi Beta Kappa production; it comes from no cap and gown society. It is beaten out, often reluctantly, by people who saw something happening in the world and in themselves, and knew it had to be talked about. Left to themselves they were just the same laggard penmen we all are—satisfied to scratch off an occasional card: "Having wonderful time, wish you were here." But they *weren't* left to themselves, so they have written their books and letters, often with quite another slant: "Having terrible time; glad God is here." The authors were men and women like us with practical concerns like ours. Somehow, though, the subjects of their writing became so urgent to them that they gave them priority. The urgencies of our very own kind of people may well be our very own kind of urgencies. Don't shy off from them w you're next getting down to brass tacks a anything.

And as for the uniformly exalted nature of biblical materials, don't let that scare you eit There are plenty of ups and downs in the bib teachings. Don't shelve the Bible as just too g to be true. There are plenty of problems in w some parts of the Bible say, and greater and m learned Christians than we are have had a lo trouble with some passages of the Bible. The m famous statement of this kind, because the m forthright, comes from that outspoken Luther. thought the Epistle of James left much to be sired. He would just as soon not have had it in Bible at all. "A right strawey" epistle he called because it seemed to teach salvation by wo rather than by faith. He felt too that the book Esther had "a superfluity of heathen naughtines And he put the book of Revelation in an appen to his German Bible, along with the Apocrypha, the people wouldn't pay too much attention to Luther wasn't the only one to move through bibli literature with some freedom, though. John Wes too remarked that "certain of the Psalms are r fit to be in a Christian's mouth." So if it is its th logical perfection that puts a reserve between t Bible and you, forget it. Some of its sentiments a statements are as inadequate and fallible as w the authors and the characters in the Bible. W must always read the Bible with discrimination, n limiting ourselves by the writers' limitations, b looking always in the Bible for that Word of G and will of God which is Jesus Christ. Do not rel gate the Bible to quiet hours and hobby time b cause its perfections make it somehow unreal. Wo it into your workaday world because it is re enough to have imperfections—and still to bear th Word of God.

Unspoiled by Asininity

And then there is that sneaking suspicion th the Bible was written by people who did not reall know what was coming off. How can the Bible h brass tacks, how could it be used by people in th midst of their daily grind if the world the Bib talks about is some artificially rosy never-neve land that has nothing in common with our world o wild storm and stress? How can the Bible be o help in ordinary living if the writers don't kno what we are up against? And as long as they tal about faith and believing and loving as if the were easy, taken for granted things, we *know* the don't know what we are up against. So we shun the Bible off as a side-interest not incorporating i in our daily lives because we simply do not see tha it has anything immediate to do with a worl where faith and believing and loving are terribly terribly hard things to do.

But now where in the world did we ever get th idea that the biblical voices say such things ar easy? No such asininity spoils any page in th book. The psalmist was never under any illusions about the world in which he lived. He knew tha his was the kind of world in which some good me

d young and some bad men lived long, in which nts could starve and sinners were lapped in luxy. He knew that right causes sometimes lose. He ew that wrong causes sometimes win. He knew at truth sometimes crumples before error. We ow that he knew all that about his world because complained about all of it in his psalms. But the almist believed. Anyway.

Amos was almost swamped in the running high us of hatred. Vicious faces swarmed around, sneer-, jeering. But Amos couldn't be budged. Jere- ah was dumped in a hole. But Jeremiah loved e foolish people who scorned him. Life was no ft touch for Jesus. It wound a hard way to Cal- ry and the cross. But Jesus forgave the authors his agony. Paul was hounded through the world, oned, starved, imprisoned, ridden out of town on rail. But Paul's hope held on.

Oh no, these men were under no illusions about e world. They knew it was the kind of world in hich you often believed and loved and hoped *in ite of* what happened to you. Their world was st our kind of world. And that's why they can be usted.

There is nothing foreign or unfamiliar about the orld the Bible sees. It is a book by everyday peo- e who lived and worked and suffered in the eryday world and who wrote to everyday people cing everyday problems and perplexities. It is not book to be reserved for mountain-top experiences d spiritual life groups and weddings and funerals d Sunday morning readings of the lesson. It is book for those who must everlastingly be getting own to brass tacks, a book for those who are keepg a home going, winning the bread for a family, eeping the wheels of industry going. In the midst all this, the Bible brings us the voice of God, the Word of God about all this.

You talk about brass tacks. What could be more the point than the Bible's message about our gnificance. The Bible tells us that we count for omething, that we matter—that we matter to God nd that he can make us matter to the world. As at master homiletician, Joseph R. Sizoo, said:

> A supplanter becomes a prince of God; a ploughman in Tekoa becomes a prophet of social justice; a man of unclean lips becomes a herald of a righteous Redeemer; a tax collector, never a popular man, becomes the writer of the First Gospel; a fallen girl by the well becomes a city missionary. A slave girl becomes the instrument through which a general is cleansed of leprosy; a boy's noonday lunch becomes a feast for thousands; an ignorant bigot becomes a preacher of the universal gospel of love. The stone which the builders reject becomes the head stone of the corner.

Is there any more immediately practical conribution to any of our decisions and deeds than his sense that what we decide and do matters ultiately because *we* matter ultimately? Is there anyhing more to the point than this, that Christ died or us—that we count, to the extent of Calvary? hat is not the kind of news we put away to conemplate in some quiet time. That is the kind of ews that makes a basic difference to every single hing we ever think or do. That *is* brass tacks.

And then what about the news of our forgiveness, as God speaks that to us through the Bible? What other word could make a more profound difference to the whole direction of our living? Instead of our sneaking along under the cloud of our guilt, this assurance of God's loving forgiveness pushes us out to live strongly, resolutely, creatively as we ought. That God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life—*that* is brass tacks too. Such assurance alters things in the most fundamental way. The common life need no more waste itself in cringing or in defiance. It can set itself to saving and building and redeeming out of gratitude for what has been given us, done for us. What could be more practical than the gospel: the knot in our moral thread, the launching pad for our ethical endeavor, the ground and force of all Christian enterprise?

The biblical message is directly related to everything we do. The hopefulness of the Word of God has to do with everything we have to do. It is not just something for our occasional delectation. It creates the new atmosphere in which new life is possible. Instead of the deadly damp of frustration and hopelessness and bewilderment, we breathe at last the bright, fresh air of finality and triumph. So we move to our regular tasks with new resolution and vigor and confidence, thrusting forward because we trust in God. This divine word of hope and promise is purest gold to us—and in our everyday lives it is the brassiest tack we have.

The Bible is for us, right where we are. Don't put it up; don't save it for later. It is for now. It is specific, its message is of practical importance, nothing else in the whole earth is quite so to the point. Of what else can be said what has been said about the Bible: "The world is not done with this Book, but the world is done without it." Anything about which that can be said, *is* brass tacks.

Christmas Prayer

O GOD, in this season of the year we seek a sentiment that is large enough for Christmas. As we sweetly admire the New-Born, may we remember the pain of birth and the agony that belongs to the coming of all that is great. As we come to stand in the hushed moment of awe, may we be aware of the long history of suffering and striving with life that prepared the way. As we receive the beauty and innocence of new life, may be perceive as well the ugliness and guilt that wait to maim and crush. For in thy coming to us by way of a manger we find bound together the powers of calm and fury, of satisfaction and need, of deep certainty and valid question. Through such fullness, O God, grant to us this day the courage to struggle for peace among men, and impart to us that peace which makes it possible for us to struggle at all. Amen.—*Edward W. Warner.*

We Are Called to Play Our Pa
In the Continuing Drama of Redempti

The Supporting Cast

By Arthur H. Kolsti

I INVITE your thoughts to focus on what we might well call "the forgotten chapter" of the gospel. If one were to sit down with the resolve to read the Gospel of Matthew, he would naturally begin with the first chapter. No doubt, just the reading of a few verses would convince the reader that he was treading on barren ground. Our reader might well decide to skip this particular section and hasten on to the story of the Magi.

Frankly, the opening verses of Matthew do appear to be dull reading. We find here simply a list of names, some of which evade proper pronunciation. Quite naturally, we might decide that this is a most unproductive chapter compared with the narrative portions of the Gospel.

And yet—it must have some meaning; otherwise Matthew would not have included it in his Gospel, nor would Luke have included a similar geneology in his work. Can there be a message in this list of names for one willing to take the time to ponder its meaning?

Quite apparently, you have to read with imagination between the names. The story is told of a playwright who, while making a phone call, held the ponderous New York telephone directory in his hands and exclaimed, "There's not much story here, but boy, what a cast!" How right he was. What a varied cast of personalities composes the day to day drama of life in a large city.

There is not much story in this first chapter of Matthew, but what a cast—Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David, Solomon. All in all some forty-seven names are mentioned—the great, the near great and the not so great. What a variety of personalities with all their faults and failures, their triumphs and tragedies! As we read their names some two thousand years of history pass in review. Here is a history that begins in a nomad's tent, drifts down through the experience of a far-flung family, flows through the experience of oppression and deliverance, sifts down through the centuries to witness the birth, glory and destruction of a nation. At the end of the list we find the name above eve name, the name of Jesus. The procession pass through the centuries and comes to rest at Beth hem. This is the end of the first act. All that h gone before now finds its purpose fulfilled in t birth of Jesus. The names given by Matthew are t names of the supporting cast in the sweeping dra of redemption.

Memory Sustains

The men who wrote the Bible had an unusu interest in geneology. Thumbing through the pag of Genesis, you find the narrative frequently i terrupted by family records. This interest in linea is not one to be explained by pride. The authors Scripture were not telling us in a vain way, "S what fine ancestors we have." Rather their intere is to be explained by their sense of history. T Hebrew had an acute sense of history. His memor of the past was a living memory that sustained hi in the present.

We might explain this influence of history by ci ing an illustration from our own experience he in this church. One thing we have as a congregati is an old building in which to worship. It is a build ing that conveys memories of another time. A times I think how nice it would be to have an ultra modern church building. But perhaps in a com munity where there are so many brand new build ings we need one with age and history, a buildin with worn stairs and weather-beaten frame, a build ing with memories that root us in the past an sustain us with the reminder that others hav walked this way before. The past has values tha can only be transmitted through memory, value that bring stability and direction to the present. S the pious Hebrew had an acute sense of history s well summed up by the Psalmist, "Lord, tho hast been our dwelling place in all generations."

When he placed this record in his Gospel, Matthew had history in mind. The lineage of Jesus wa something more to him than a list of names. It wa history with a purpose. Hovering over this list o names is a providence behind which stands the sovereign will of God. Matthew gives us the onl proper setting for the story of Christmas, the set ting of history. Christmas is more than a birthday; it is an event in the unfolding of a plan from the

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ind of God. Our own experience of Christmas deds for its enrichment and accuracy upon catchthe full sweep of this vision.

God has a plan and a purpose. How hard it is at es to believe that. How hard at times to believe t life is anything more than accidental. Tragedy l suffering abound. So much happens apparently hout rhyme or reason that in our reflective mom- s these things bring the doubts tumbling in on our minds, arousing suspicions about the odness of God.

Yes, this is the affirmation of our faith—God s a plan. How do we justify that plan in terms the inconsistencies of life? How are we to under- nd the untold suffering of Hungarian martyrs, ward of a city hospital filled with terminal es, an afflicted child, the suffering of the innot? Where is God's plan and purpose in all this?

No Nice, Neat World

Just at this point one thing becomes clear about s plan of God. It is not a plan that evolves in at one, two, three fashion. As Matthew looked ck over the years, they were not years wherein erything had gone neatly and according to plan. here had been calamities and tragedies, sin and bellion. Yet, in and through all, God had been ght in the middle of things.

Is not this the whole point of Christmas—not at we are going to have a nice, neat world, but at God is involved in this world as it is? In ohn's Gospel we find these words, "the light ines in the darkness, and the darkness does not ercome it." The darkness does not disappear. The rkness remains. But in the midst of the darkness, e light remains.

The whole gospel drama is cast against the backound of darkness. Jesus comes as the child of the or and hunted, facing all the limitations of life a totalitarian state. He ends his life as darkness scends upon a cross-topped hill outside Jerulem. Across his brief span of years, however, we hold a life of such dimensions that we know ined his arrival to be something more than an accient. It comes to us as the wonder and mystery of od himself working in and through the experiences life.

The Bible is a great book for names and personalies. With what vivid colors the Gospel writers aint the persons who pass through their stories. he biblical interest in names is but a reflection of od's interest in persons. The occasion for the visit Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem was the census ecreed by Caesar Augustus. The Roman emperor as making a count of his vast empire. He wanted o know how many subjects were under him and o set in motion the impersonal machinery of the ensus. God, on the other hand, is interested in ames rather than numbers. Even though he is the overeign of millions upon millions, he singles out he individual in the mystery and the wonder of is matchless love.

Jesus embodied and intensified this divine conern for even the least of persons. This is a reason or his attractiveness to so many men. Men felt a different standing in his presence. Both you and I are attracted to the person who treats us warmly. The true story is recorded of a certain man who went through the examination process of a large medical center. A few months later when he had need of a doctor, he made an appointment with one of the many doctors who had examined him. During the consultation the doctor asked, "Why did you happen to choose me to be your doctor? Surely there were many doctors who examined you at the clinic." "I know," replied the patient, "but you were the only one who helped me to put on my overcoat."

Love Is the Last Word

This is the sort of feeling men received around Jesus. He made them feel valuable, wanted, respected. Jesus does this to us. He gives us a new confidence in ourselves. This is not a brash feeling of self-importance but the basic feeling that we belong in this universe, that we count, that even the smallest duty we fulfill receives notice in the sight of God. The undefinable feeling of Christmas is above all a feeling of comfort and belonging.

God's love is the reality before which the inconsistencies of life lose their terror. In the light of this love it is inconceivable that sin, tragedy, affliction should ever be the last word about life. It is inconceivable that a terminal ward, an institution or a grave should be the final resting place of a human life. In one sense that list of Matthew is a complete list, but in another sense it is an incomplete list; for in that list are those who did not realize the fulfillment of their humanity upon earth. And yet there is fulfillment, the fulfillment that belongs to those whose lives are caught up in a purpose that goes beyond human imagination and transcends the human situation.

This is the only view that makes sense out of life. Remove Jesus from the picture, take away Christmas, Good Friday and Easter, and life becomes a picture of futility. For if such a life is the highest stage of our experience, the last act of the drama, then, of course, God is not good and there is no purpose in life.

But, this is not the last word. The evangelists point us toward a wide, benevolent and sweeping purpose that extends beyond the bounds of vision, a purpose whose ultimate end is the redemption and reunion of humanity in God's Kingdom of love, truth and justice.

A Vision to Be Lived

Because Christmas reveals the true dimensions of life, the terror is taken from the tragedies of life. Once a man is convinced of these dimensions, death loses its terror. The contradictions of life are met in us with the powerful assurance that God's purpose extends beyond the occasions for our confusion and fear.

God has a plan. This plan concerns persons. We are part of this plan. You and I are part of the supporting cast. Matthew has given us one list of names; these were the supporting cast for the first act. Now, new names were to be added to the list;

the New Testament opens and closes with a list of names. At the start is Matthew's list of those who have been part of the preparation. In the book of Revelation we read of the Lamb's book of life, the list of those who have faithfully lived during the second act.

Christmas is a day to be celebrated. More than a day, it is a vision to be lived. God's purposes are fulfilled through persons. Whatever Christmas is to mean, that meaning needs to come through us. Christ could come into our world because there was a circle of persons prepared to receive him, to believe in him, to follow him. Since Christ has come once and for all, the world can never erase his memory. But his continual coming in our world depends upon our devotion and service, our attitudes and actions, our obedience and fidelity. Spiritual events take place in the hearts and minds of men and women. The peace of which the angels sing, the good will that is proclaimed, the unselfish sentiments of love and service—these never come until they come first in our own lives, until there takes place that inward revolution which is the gift of God.

Matthew gives us the lineage of Jesus to the time of his birth. From Bethlehem onward the line stretches a wider and more inclusive line. The lives of the faithful in all ages make up the supporting cast in the continuing drama of redemption. Each one of us is part of a generation through which God is seeking to work out his purpose. God grant that when the story of our day is finally written, it may be said of us—"These were among the supporting cast; these were the generation of Jesus Christ."

An Apocryphal Advent Tale

By Arland O. Fiske

IT is possible that we could now have had 2245 A.D. instead of 1958 A.D. At this time the Lord planned to deliver his people from their bondage. He had arranged a full scale entry of the Messiah in coordination with the Temple authorities, as he felt they ought to be in on the developments. When the day came, the High Priest came out at the head of a great throng to meet him. The people stood on their tiptoes to catch a glimpse of him.

There was not much time allotted for handshaking or interviews, as they whisked him away as quickly as possible to the High Priest's residence. There he was properly wined and dined. Having never had a visitor from heaven before, the authorities were extremely anxious to give him a favorable impression.

He didn't have much chance to really see the countryside, as all of his tours were planned in advance and the local welcoming committees were well organized. But it was a wonderful trip! They apologized for the condition of the Temple, and said, "You ought to have seen the one Solomon built. You would really have been impressed with that!"

Several times the Messiah attempted to discuss spiritual matters with the scribes and priests. He suggested better ways of doing their work, but didn't get too far since they always agreed with him in everything. One of the scribes had been an exchange student in Athens and had spent some time in Ephesus en route. He asked the Messiah if he had heard anything about the "Logos" theory and would he care to make any comments. He replied, "Not at this time." This could have been interesting but just then one of the young priests recently out of the theological seminary broke in with a question about liturgy. The Messiah said he felt a headache coming on and asked permission to retire to his quarters.

The Throne, seeing that the Messiah was not being successful in his mission, sent Gabriel with a message that midnight, which read, "Return home at once . . . must plan new strategy." He sorrowfully stole outside to where the celestial chariot was waiting. He vowed, "Next time I'll come as a pauper instead of as a prince and there will be no advance notices sent out for reception committees to be organized. They never would have crucified me."

The local authorities were surprised when they found the guest suite empty, and only the note from the Throne remaining. But they weren't exactly disappointed. In fact, they went back to breathing more easily again. After all, this bit of entertaining had been quite a strain on them.

This was the year 287 B.C., during the reign of the Ptolemies of Egypt, who were rather generous rulers so long as no one caused them trouble. At the next meeting of the Temple Trustees, the High Priest was present. He prefaced his remarks by saying, "Gentlemen, we had a close call."

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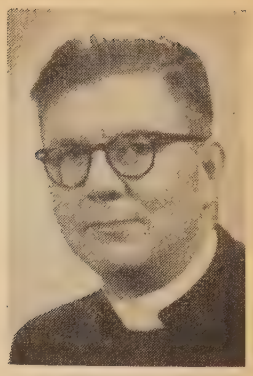
hen We Say There Is No Room for the Jew,
e Are Rejecting Jesus Once Again



The Gentile Shame

By Lee A. Belford

Ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no eans! . . . God has not rejected his people whom foreknew. . . . they are beloved for the sake of eir forefathers. For the gifts and the call of God e irrevocable. Romans 11:1, 2, 28, 29.

GOD, according to St. Paul, has not rejected his people. We have. The discrimination against e Jews is not a problem for historians and sociolsts; it is a challenge to Christianity. When we spise an entire group of people, we serve the cause antichrist. Discrimination reflects an illness of e heart, an atrophy of the soul, a sin which rots way the human personality.

Sermons are sometimes comforting and they ght to be. Sometimes sermons are disturbing and ey ought to be. What I am about to say will be sturbing, I hope—so disturbing that it will lead amendment of life. What I am about to say deals ith our attitude toward the Jews. If the literary agedies of Greece or of Shakespeare can speak to in meaningful fashion, how much more potent the tragic history of a people—a tragedy with ou and me as culprits and the people against whom e have inflicted our indignities true heroes of the irit.

Where do you begin a story when almost every y in history illustrates the point you would like make? We could begin with Constantine, the st Christian emperor. He was the first emperor place Christianity on a basis of equality with her religions but before he died, Christianity was ade official and the slow process began of depriv- g other religious groups of their freedom in wor- ip.

We could start with the Council of Toledo in the venth century. This council passed a law that as all too often typical. The Jews were ordered present themselves for baptism within the year d, if they failed to do so, they were to be punished with a hundred strokes of the lash, have their hair pulled out, their property confiscated and then be expelled from the country.

We could start with almost any country in the Middle Ages. The Jews could not change their residence without permission. They were forbidden to own land or to farm or to engage in any of the professions that brought them into contact with Gentiles, except for banking. Because Christians could not lend money to each other on interest, they forced the Jews to be the capitalists for them. In selecting our locale in the Middle Ages we might encounter those areas that forbade Jews to marry and where their children were legally kidnaped that they might be baptized and raised as Christians.

We could start with the crusades. Off to rescue the Holy Land from the infidels, the crusaders stopped along the way to give the Jews the alternative of baptism or death. We really would not have to differentiate between the crusades because in pillage and massacre they differed from each other only in gruesome detail.

Have we Christians made the Jews jealous of our heritage? With a knife at their throats we said, "Be baptized or die." Do you think this would lead the Jews to believe that Jesus was the Christ who had come to bring peace to men of good will? Could the Jews really believe that Christianity is a religion of brotherly love when they saw their villages plundered and their people massacred? Jewish historians are agreed that the Muslims always treated the Jews better than the Christians. They go on to add that Christians century after century seemed to be the sworn enemies of Judaism, expressing a depravity comparable to no other people. What sort of defense can we offer to that accusation? None, I am afraid.

The annals of history present an almost uninterrupted series of persecutions. Almost every elemental human right was denied except one. In most instances they were given the freedom to die for their faith, to die a martyr's death. It was only when we got to the modern world, to the time of our generation, that even this right was denied. With the rise to power of Adolph Hitler in 1933, the systematic and methodical extermination of six million Jews began, a third of the entire Jewish people. The atrocities were extended from the boundaries of the

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Third Reich to eastern Europe and to the south with increasing vehemence. Faith was not a factor. If you were a Christian, the son of a Christian, the grandson of a Christian, but had a Jewess as a grandmother, you died as a Jew. The Hitler holocaust was a catastrophe unique in its magnitude and atrociousness. And yet for too long we were quiescent. We were silent except for a few voices when men and women, children and infants, were mercilessly destroyed for no reason other than that they were Jewish. Is there anything more wicked than to say that a group of people, created by God, has no right to live, that there is no place for them on this earth? Those who were instruments, those of us who were quiescent—we will have to answer.

How have the Jews been able to survive at all? That is an important question. Surely they must be a people with a God-given destiny. Perhaps a part of that destiny is to carry us to the cross to see more clearly the young Jew who hung there, dying in innocence for our sins.

"Reasons" for Persecution

What are the reasons for the attempts to extirpate the Jews from the face of the earth? The real reason is man's depravity—it is a matter of the human heart. But we are rationalizers and we do give our reasons, fallacious as they may be. Let us review some of these rationalizations briefly.

Historians tell us the Jews were persecuted because they did not conform to the basic cultural patterns. For much of Western history it was the assumption that the religion of the ruler would be the religion of the people. Religious nonconformity was equated with political disloyalty. For the Jews to hold their religious beliefs regardless of the religion of the ruler made them suspect.

The cry of the Babylonians, the cry of the Greeks, the cry of the Romans was that the Jews would not assimilate. They would not merge and be absorbed into the dominant culture. Suppose the Jews had been assimilated after Jerusalem fell. Suppose that the Jews had been assimilated at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Would we have had our Bible, would we have had Jesus of Nazareth who is understandable only in the light of biblical faith, or the Apostles and founders of Christianity who understood and were willing to accept martyrdom because they came from a heritage where death was not too great a price to pay for integrity? Surely Jesus, a Jew, could be proud of the loyalty of his ancestors who refused to compromise their faith and surely now, sitting at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, he is proud of his people who accepted martyrdom in preference to compromise.

The Jews have been accused of self-enrichment at the expense of other peoples. The Jew was forced into commerce and banking through most of the history of Western civilization because all other opportunities for lawful income were denied him. To force him into trades where he would be despised, for it is a truism that no one loves the merchant or banker to whom he is indebted, was a terribly evil thing. The Jews have been criticized for being not only national bankers but international as well. The House of Rothschild becomes an easy symbol. A yet we honor and venerate the House of Morg The Brown Brothers, the Harrimans and other gr names we honor. We save our opprobrium for Jew who excels doing the same sort of thing.

The Jew has been criticized for social radicali The intellectual founder of communism was K Marx. We remember that some of his ancestors w Jews. We forget that he was a baptized Christi Trotsky of the Russian revolution was a Jew but was soon ousted. Considering the number of Je in Russia, they have not been proportionately rep sented in the government of Russia.

In our country Jews are active in the uni movement, particularly in the garment indust but most of the workers in the garment indust are Jews. It is true that the Jew is often on the si of the underprivileged. Southern racists ha bombed synagogues because some Jews expressed a belief that the Supreme Court represented the la of the land and that if the Court said there oug to be racial integration, there ought to be.

It has been suggested that the Jews have homeland and therefore are never really patriot This is another suggestion that does not stand u In every war America has ever fought, the Je have been on the front lines. In our Civil War the were Jews on both sides, meeting each other common enemies. No student of modern histo could ever impugn their patriotism.

A *Chinese* Jew?

The Jew has been criticized because he belonge to a race that was somehow different from all othe races. Hitler, for example, put in contrast what h called the Aryan and Jewish races but Hitler was poor observer and a poor anthropologist. He did no represent in his stature the Aryan stereotype—th tall blond with blue eyes. Some German Jews di represent in physical structure this pattern. But, o course, the concept of race is a dubious one becaus there are no pure types. Although intermarriag has been discouraged in Judaism, intermarriage ha always occurred. The story is told of an America rabbi who introduced himself to a rabbi in Shangha as a Jew. The Chinese rabbi looked at him wit some incredulity. "You don't look like a Jew to me," he said. Of course he did not look like a Chines Jew. A Yemenite Jew looks more like a Yemenite than a German Jew and a Polish Jew looks more like a Pole than a Peruvian Jew.

The Jews have been accused of being basically an inferior people. This accusation is completely ridiculous. How absurd it is to call people inferior while asserting that if they are permitted to compete equally in any field—the arts, sciences, professions, business and labor—they will dominate it. Those who have been most critical of the Jews have not been censorious in terms of ability or morality but rather in terms of envy.

Jews do excel in every field. If one considers the total Jewish population of the world and compares it with the men of eminence Judaism has produced, the figures are startling. Whether it is in painting, the dance, the theater, literature, philosophy, pure

ence, medicine, psychoanalysis, labor and on rough a long list of vocations, Judaism has pro- led an unduly high proportion of creative pio- ers and leaders. Great names like Bergson, Freud, nstein and Baruch are on the lips of us all.

Actually, the ability of the Jew to excel is prob- ly not so much innate as conditioned. Deprived opportunities for education and creative expres- n through so much of history, when given them ey have made the most of them. Part of the ex- llence is probably compensatory. Knowing that ey were handicapped in the competitive world, ey were forced to excel in order to receive posi- ns that would be given to Gentiles with lower vels of accomplishment.

Forgiveness—for Christians

Throughout Christian history the Jews have en anathematized for having crucified Christ. At e time of the crucifixion it is said they invoked a rse upon themselves when some of the religious aders asked that the blood of Christ rest upon emselves and upon their children. But the matter bearing a curse is for God to decide. It is cer- inly not for the Christian man to arrogate to mself the responsibility for seeing to it that the ople really are the accursed. If Jesus could say the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know t what they do," surely we too have an obligation forgive. But Jesus was concerned with forgiveness r those who did evil. He was not suggesting that ews needed forgiveness simply because they were ews. We are the ones who need forgiveness today r we, in our persecutions, have been the accursed.

Of course, the basic problem is not whether Jews e good or bad. The question of Jewish imperfec- on is irrelevant. The basic problem is whether we e good or bad. The problem is our imperfection. ecause we are the in-group, the majority, and ave an influence and power that the Jews do not, ur sins are that much more consequential.

The Christian, thoroughly convinced of the di- inity of Christ and with a mission to the world, has een frustrated by the refusal of the Jews to dis- ppear as a group from the face of the earth. By hristian logic, all Jews should have been converted Christianity long ago. The motivation of conver- on has at various times resulted in an amelioration f relations but when such a strategy was not effec- ve, the frustration only increased. Let me illus- rate this last point. In 1523 Martin Luther pub- shed a pamphlet entitled "That Jesus Christ was orn a Jew." Luther declared that "If we wish to elp them we must act toward them according to he law of Christ . . . love." But when they did not egin to convert to Christianity at once, Luther was urious. His anger increased until he was vitriolic. He wrote increasingly more denunciatory tracts gainst them. His final conclusion was that such a tiff-necked people could not really be God's people.

I do not believe that all religions are equally ood. Because, as a Christian, I believe in Jesus hrist as my Lord and Savior and Redeemer and ecause my beliefs as a Christian are meaningful to ne, I want to share them. I would like to see all people genuinely converted to Christianity. But to be tolerant toward a different religious group only with the objective of conversion is essentially the wrong motivation. Aside from the prospects of conversion I am called upon to respect and honor all people. I must respect their freedom and their right to choose whom they will serve. Religious commitment comes only out of a situation of freedom. Going one step further, without freedom and commitment there is not genuine religion. In the name of freedom all men have the basic right to believe and worship as they please, provided that their beliefs and practices do not interfere with similar rights of other people. It is this conviction which must control our relations with other religious and cultural groups.

When we consider the long history of the persecutions and indignities to which we have subjected the Jews, when we consider all that we have done to the family of our Lord, we ought to be filled with shame. Such a knowledge ought to drive every man to his knees in despair. A sign of genuine contrition is restitution. We can not undo what was done in the past but we still have our opportunities to atone. How can we? By treating them with equality, the first principle of justice.

Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room for his mother at the inn. Today when we say there is no room for the Jew, we are rejecting Jesus once again. As Saul of Tarsus was on the road to Damascus he heard a voice from the heavens, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Listen attentively and you will hear the same question. Saul was converted and persecuted no more. How will we answer?

Peace on Earth

(Continued from page 5)

faith and black despair into blessedness. For the story of Bethlehem can be understood only after Golgotha—and Easter morning!

Realizing this, we dare to join the millions of Christians in singing our greatest and most majestic anthem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." For we are sure we are not forlorn and forgotten. *There can be peace! God is alive!* His hand is mightier than the H-Bomb. We repeat the words of Richard Crashaw:

> The Babe looked up and showed his face;
> In spite of darkness it was day.

Because God is as good as his best creature—since the universe cannot produce anything better than it is—we eagerly commit ourselves unreservedly to the Christlike Deity. In him we find unity in love, strength for character, power in divine purpose, and the friendship of a Father-God who, because he is like Christ, will never fail us. At Bethlehem we find peace—even in 1958—peace *and* power. This is why we sing sincerely, lustily and excitedly: "Glory to God . . . Good will toward all men!"

Yom Kippur

The Day of Atonement

COME my brothers
let us chant the prayers,
the chanting prayers.
Let us huddle in our shawls,
our black and white,
our white and black,
our striped shawls,
our fringed shawls.
Come my brothers
let us sing the prayers;
let us shout the prayers:
Shema ysroel adonoi elonhainu adonoi echod.

Come my brothers
let us mumble the prayers;
let us shake and rock;
let us sing our prayers.
Let us cover our heads
to uncover our prayers.
Let us pray:
Boruch atoh adonoi elohainu melech hoolom
asher borcha bornoo mekall hawameem
awmein, awmein, awmein.

Here we sit
and here we much sit;
here we sit
and tremble
everyone of us.
We sit in fear;
we sit in fear of burning;
from burning
to burning.
We sit in fear;
we lie in fear;
we sleep in fear
of burning.
How many of us have been burned?
How many more will be burned?
Why?
Why have they feared us so
that they have burned us
for our religion and our irreligion?
Why have they burned us for being different
or too much like them?
Why?
Come my brothers
let us turn the leather thongs around our fingers;
let us tie the thongs about our wrists;
let us tie the thongs around our heads.
Let us pray.
Let us pray to pray again:
Vyiskadal vyiskadash sh'meh rabbah.

Why are we tormented
far beyond torment?
Why have we been tortured and murdered?
Why have we been slandered and calumnied?
Why have we been set apart?
What have we done?
When did we do it?
and will our terror never end?

Come my brothers
let us read the words;
let us say the words;
let us pray:
Borechu es adonoi, adonoi echod.
We have been purified and sanctified in our own blood,
and we have died, and we shall die again.
Why?
For whom have we died?
and why?
We have died for those who hate us most,
and for those who love us least.
We have died for those who love us most,
and for those who hate us least.
We have died for ignorance, indifference, stupidity and love.
We have died for intelligence, fortitude, ambition, and hate.
We have died of success
and want of success.
We have sinned;
no more nor less than others,
but in us a small sin is a great thing,
a terrible thing.

Come my brothers
let us pray.
Let us atone for all our sins of everyday every day
Let us pray.
Kol nidre vayhesuray oshvuay vachrumay
vay koynumay hocknusay vechunuyasy.
We shall not convert the others.
We should not convert the others.
We cannot convert the others.
We shall be their conscience and their crime;
and we shall pay for them;
and we have payed for them;
and we are paying for them now.

We are the eternal Christ upon the cross indifferent.
We are the eternal gift of God to man.
We are the eternal sacrifice.
This our presumption
and this is our sin,
and for this sin we must pay,
and we have payed,
and we are paying now.

Come my brothers
let us lift up our prayer shawls,
let us chant the prayers,
the chanting prayers.
Let us huddle in our shawls,
our black and white,
our white and black,
our striped shawls,
our fringed shawls.
Come my brothers
let us sing the prayers,
let us shout the prayers:
Shema ysroel adonoi elohainu adonoi echod.

HERBERT CAMENSON.

The Firing of a Missile Has Metaphorical Precision

Saving Love

By Charles D. Kean

... that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and ... ere is no occasion of stumbling in him. I John 2:10.

THE early Christian church was able to infiltrate the Graeco-Roman world of the first few centuries of our era because it both proclaimed a hope and also lived a community life which was in marked contrast to the moral and spiritual climate of the age. Someone watching the martyrs helping each other as they entered the amphitheaters to die observed with wonder, "See these Christians how they love one another." And this spirit turned the classical world upside down.

St. John in his First Epistle says, "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him." I am sure that we do not experience Christian love in its fullness very often, but we can realize without too much stretch of the imagination what St. John means. He that loveth his brother, in the sense that the saving love of Jesus Christ through him touches the life of his brother, such a person finds that his own experience takes sense in a new and powerful way, and that instead of being a problem in his brother's way he becomes a light upon his brother's path.

The task of the individual Christian man and woman and the corporate task of the Christian fellowship is to bring the saving love of Jesus Christ to a confused and loveless world. It is interesting, therefore, to note that the word *missile* which is so much in the press today as the military symbol of an anxious age, and the word *mission* which is the great term describing the purpose of the Christian life not only in foreign parts but wherever it is lived—that these two words, *missile* and *mission*, come from the past participle of the Latin word, *mitto*—to send. A missile or an Intercontinental Missile or a rocket sending up an earth satellite to its orbit is a projectile sent out to suggest the threat if not yet the fact of destructive power. The Christian mission—in your life and mine, in our parochial and denominational life and in the witness of ecumenical Christianity to an unconverted world is another kind of projectile—a quality of life sent out to suggest the reconciliation of sinful men in the peace of God.

There are three aspects of the firing of a missile which we might borrow to apply to the Christian mission of bringing the saving love of Christ to the world. First, there is an objective—missiles have a target, they are not just fired off haphazardly. Secondly, there is a propulsion—missiles are driven by an explosive force. Thirdly, there is the flight in which new power is exerted from time to time as needed while the course is corrected as the projectile speeds on its way.

The Objective

Whether we are thinking of a Nike or a Thor or a Jupiter, or of the Christian life being sent out into the world, there is a target at which the projectile is aimed. It is not fired haphazardly just for the fun of it. It has a goal which it is supposed to reach. When we read of some failure in an experiment at Cape Canaveral, as often as not this means that the missile did not reach its objective, but rather fell short.

The Christian church can never be its true self in the world unless it accepts seriously its responsibility to bring the saving love of Christ to men and groups of men who are living in spiritual confusion. The Christian church is not meant to be a mutual congratulation society of people who enjoy each other's company and therefore need not be concerned about what is going on in the larger affairs of men and nations around them. Neither is the Christian church meant to be a kind of huddling together of frightened anxious folk who hope to find security in fellowship the way musk oxen do on the northern tundras. Rather the Christian church exists to change the world and when it forgets this fact it is apostate.

Throughout the history of the human race, people have sought both for a social unity which would undergird the hopes and fears of individuals with a sense of belonging to something significant and real, and which would provide the opportunity for individual men and women and small groups of people to express their creative possibilities freely. We can read the history of mankind and the biog-

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raphy of most individuals as a tragic alternation between a unity which becomes oppressive and an individualism which becomes irresponsible. Only the power of Christian love can enable people, whether in families or offices or in the larger groupings of races and nations, both to be freely themselves and to complement each other gladly.

This is our target. We are sent into this modern world of lonely, isolated individuals on the one hand, and the great impersonal collectives of personnel and machines on the other hand, with a mission. Where the saving love of Christ can touch these situations which warp and twist and often destroy the God-given potentialities of people, light will shine in the world's darkness. Our target is a loveless, bitter world which cannot save itself.

The Propulsion

Whether we are thinking of ICBM's able to travel 5,000 miles or of other projectiles able to carry a satellite up 100,000 feet or whether we are thinking of the Christian life, there must be an explosive force to send it on its way and keep it going. We are not sure in this country whether the Russians have developed a new and more powerful solid fuel for their rockets but we do know that military and scientific achievement in this area depends upon ever-improved fuels with higher explosive thrust. No object can be launched from complete rest and accelerated within seconds to a speed three or more times the speed of sound without a tremendous drive behind it.

The difference between the Christian church and many of the other societies and programs for the public good is not primarily in their ideals or ethical standards. Neither is it to be found in practical concern for human welfare. In our modern world probably more humanitarian activity is carried on under community auspices than under church sponsorship and this is all right. These other groups may in fact derive a secondary motivation from the religious faith of the founders or the religious activities of contemporary leaders. The primary difference between the Christian church and all other forms of benevolent enterprise is in the propulsion.

As Christians, as individuals, parishes and groups inspired by a common faith, we are sent into the world because Christ drives us there and will give us no rest until we act. The only alternative is to turn our backs on him and have as little as possible to do with him—and even then he will not leave us alone.

The Flight

The love of Christ is the explosive power which can make the Christian church spiritual dynamite in a despairing, unhappy world. When we as individuals or in our organized church life forget this fact and act as if we could meet the world's need with our own resources, the resulting fizzle makes the failure of the two Vanguard missiles at Cape Canaveral seem like tremendous success. When Christ empowers us, as his spirit overcomes the forces which separate us from each other without reducing unity in faith and love to dull uniformity in life, then we witness to the world the lively h for which all men dream. But we cannot do it ourselves.

Whether we are thinking of the rocket assem which carried Explorer to its orbit or of how rocket fired in Florida reached its goal near Asc sion Island in the southeast Atlantic, or wheth we are thinking of the Christian life continuing fulfill its mission day after day and year after ye the fact remains that in either case the flight h to be sustained and the course corrected while t projectile is on its way. In the case of the missi which carried the earth-satellites aloft, we are t that two or three rockets were discharged in sta so that as one burned out, it dropped off and a other continued the thrust. In the case of ICBM or torpedoes fired from submarines, there is a bui in device which receives electronic impulses a corrects the course.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not launch a mov ment 1900 or so years ago and then leave it to sin or swim. The Gospel of St. Matthew hears him sa "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end the world." Jesus Christ serves the purpose f Christian life, both of supplying the booster pow which is continually needed and of correcting t direction in which we are going. And this is tru both for individuals who are seeking to work ou the meaning of Christian faith and hope in t practical details of family life and among the pre sures of business experience, and also for groups people who are seeking to maintain what they b lieve to be worth living for in a world which neve really understands why.

Christ serves as the booster, as through praye and sacrament and response to the reading of God' Holy Word, we recognize our own limitations an need for power beyond our own resources. Chris serves as the correction for our course, as we ar continually saved from thinking that we ourselve are the end of God's concern rather than mean through which God seeks to reach out ever mor widely and more deeply. To be confronted by th cross of Christ is to encounter both the dynami of God's love empowering our all too feeble an too sentimental good intentions, and God's purpos reminding us that we live and work not for our selves alone but for the saving of the whole poten tial family of the children of God.

What St. John wrote in his first Epistle 190 years ago is still true, "He that loveth his brothe abideth in the light, and there is no occasion fo stumbling in him." And as we in 1958 hear the Word of God concerning the saving love of Christ addressed to our age of nuclear weapons, push-button projectiles, man-made satellites and international hostility, we can do no better than to respond in the words of the Jerusalem Missionary Conference of a quarter-century ago:

> We cannot live without Christ.
> We cannot think of others living without him.
> We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christlike.
> We cannot be idle while the longing of His heart for his brethren is unsatisfied.

Haunted or Hallowed?

By J. A. Davidson

WHILE thumbing through an old copy of the *New Yorker* recently I came across a cartoon ich rather sadly delineates the way many of us nowadays. Two young women are shown in a all apartment. Apparently they have just re- ned from their day's work, and are now trying relax and make the most of their leisure. Both them look thoroughly bored. The caption has of them saying to the other, "I don't know ether to take a Benzedrine and go to the party a Nembutal and go to bed."

How typically bright and modern those young men are! And how pitifully so! Life so bleak t both gaiety and sleep can be induced only drugs!

Jesus told a little story which throws a great al of light on the spiritual plight of flowers of r civilization such as these. With unforgettable ce and simplicity he gives expression to his ine insight into the root cause of distress in the l of man. Here is his story as we find it in St. ke's eleventh chapter:

> When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes he finds it swept and put in order. Then he goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

That gruesome little story probably does not ean very much to most people nowadays. We phisticated moderns cannot be expected to take nclean spirits," demons, very seriously. We feel at that sort of thing is merely primitive super- lition, and we dismiss it with our knowing smiles. nd probably we are quite right in not taking very riously the New Testament demons as such. We n recognize belief in demons and their power as rt of the normal mental furniture of the people those days, a bit of their primitive folklore. ery few people today would hold that mental and moral abnormality and emotional distress are caused by demons, and we tend to feel quite superior to the primitive folk who believed in demons. No, in place of demons we have all our various "complexes," "fixations," "obsessions," "frustrations" and all the other grisly inhabitants of our new demon-land! And we do speak so very knowingly about such things! We really should not worry too much about the demons in Jesus' little story. Whatever we choose to do about them, the cutting truth of the story persists. The truth which Jesus proclaims in the story has nothing to do with demons as such; the demons are merely props, brought in to help dramatize a principle of man's inner life.

Unoccupied Soul

The story proclaims that it is not enough to drive the demons out of your life. You may get rid of your cares and your worries, resolve all your frustrations, drive out boredom and all the other demons that haunt your soul, but unless something positive and powerful takes their place you will soon be much worse off than you were before. Yes, one of the secrets of being miserable is to drive the demons out of your life and try to leave your soul vacant. Overcome your worries and anxieties! Straighten out your complexes and frustrations! Begone, dull care! Destroy that rugged old demon, boredom, using all the wonderful aids this ingenious age provides! But leave your soul unoccupied, and soon you find to your horror, that the empty house becomes the haunted house! Illustrative of the plight of people who seek to escape life's miseries merely by trying to drive out the demons that haunt them is the story of the old Irishman who was given overmuch to the bottle. One day he was asked why he drank so heavily. "I drink to drown me sorrows," he said. "And are you successful in doing that, Pat?" he was then asked. "Indeed I'm not," he replied sadly, "the divils can swim!" Too many people today know exactly what Pat meant.

The demons that haunt the soul of modern man are a pretty robust lot, for we find that our fashionable demon-eradicators cannot quite handle them. Standardized pleasures and prefabricated entertainments, careless use of drugs and alcohol,

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tried-and-tested psychological gimmicks—perhaps they can drive out some of our demons, but they cannot keep them out!

"And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first." The empty house soon becomes the haunted house. What other way is open to us? What can take the place of rampaging demons in the soul of man?

Here we come sharply up against one of the great centralities of the Christian faith. It is the belief that somehow Almighty God comes right into our lives, that he can, if we will let him, take possession of the vacant dwelling. This is one of the fundamental aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Fogbound

I fear that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit means very little to most modern Christians. James Reid, one of Britain's great pulpit voices, has lamented, "When we think of the Holy Spirit our minds are apt to become fogbound." And the eminent English theologian, Canon Charles Raven, wrote recently, "the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the most neglected and least understood part of Christian theology."

Perhaps it is the use in the creeds of the old term, "the Holy Ghost," that throws us off. I can remember when I was growing up how uncomfortable I felt when I heard that expression. It seemed to me to suggest an element in our faith of rather silly spookiness. The word "ghost" does have today a rather comical-eerie flavor; three and four hundred years ago it was a good word, but over the years changes in popular usage have made it a misleading and somewhat unsuitable term. It might be best if we forgot all about the word "ghost," and used only the expression, "the Holy Spirit."

What, then, does it mean to say, "I believe in the Holy Spirit"? In *The Catechism* of The United Church of Canada, we are told, "The Holy Spirit is God at work in our minds and hearts." That is quite clear, isn't it? The Scottish theologian, W. G. Riddell, says that when we say we believe in the Holy Spirit, "we are declaring with joyful confidence that God is in touch with us." The Anglican theologian, F. W. Dillistone, offers a definition that is as profound as it is simple: "The Holy Spirit is God in action in human life."

So you see, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not just so much impractical speculation. Belief in and experience of the Holy Spirit is of the very heart of our faith. Deny the reality of the Holy Spirit and you deny the reality of the Christian religion.

Yes, God *is* in touch with man. God *does* make contact with us. And if this be not so, if God is not really in touch with us, if he does not come into our lives, then, I put it to you, our faith is sheer nonsense. God is not simply a distant deity, away off there somewhere, living in complete and splendid isolation. God also has his life in the soul of man. The living God, the Creator of all things, who has shown himself to us supremely in Jesus Christ, is also a present reality, a living presence.

Now do you see what lies behind Jesus' li
story about the empty house? The alternative
the demon-infested life is the God-hallowed
You have your choice—you can be haunted,
you can be hallowed. The house of the demon
become the property of God. That is what St. P
had in mind when he wrote to the Corinthia
"Do you not know that you are God's temple
that God's Spirit dwells in you?"

This is not pious speculation. This is Christ
experience. God *does* act in human life. God *d*
indwell the soul of man. And when the Holy Sp
of God is there, the demon and his friends
kept out.

How, then, does the Spirit of the living G
come to dwell in the soul of man, in your so
First of all, you must decide to let God in. T
decision is always yours to make. God never
erces. God never bullies. God knocks at the d
of your heart, but he never tries to batter it dov
The decision is yours. And do not make the m
take of assuming that such a decision is a on
and-for-all matter. Your whole life must be a c
tinuing act of decision, decision to open the d
to God's Holy Spirit.

It is you who determines the force and the qu
ity of the impact of God's Holy Spirit on yo
soul. God is always ready to come into your li
but he is never coercive. He will not try to for
the defenses of your soul. You must decide to l
him in, and you must make the continuing effo
to keep the door open to him. In other words, y
have to work at your religion! This is the Chri
tian's way through the ills which beset the sou
of men.

As you pray, God's Holy Spirit comes into yo
life. As you read Holy Scripture and ponder deep
on what you are reading, God's Holy Spirit com
into your life. As you share in the corporate wo
ship of the church and as you join the fellowshi
at the holy table, God's Holy Spirit comes int
your life. As you engage in Christian service i
submission to God's rule, God's Holy Spirit com
into your life.

This is God's way with us. The house of th
demons can become a temple of God's Spiri
Haunted or hallowed, the decision is yours. Tak
your choice: "And the last state of that man be
comes worse than the first" — or "God's Spiri
dwells in you."

Prayer

ETERNAL God, our Heavenly Father, help u
to believe this day that there is a power t
lift us up, which is far stronger than all the thing
that would hold us down. Make us to be sensitive
to what is beautiful, and responsive to that which
is good, that day by day we may grow more sure o
the beauty and goodness of life. May we be quick
to see, and ready to encourage, whatever brings a
better understanding of life and a keener insight
into human relationships. Amen.—*Donald E. Riker.*

Jerusalem Revisited

(Continued from page 8)

e sentences were these: "In recent years there ve arisen in Germany Karl Barth, Emil Brunner d Karl Heim. They are all irrationalists." That s all that it was thought necessary for us as 20th ntury American preachers to know about these eer new theologians. So, like naughty schoolboys, ne of us ran off to the seminary library to read books of these bad men whom the professor uld not discuss.

But the years have passed and today in almost y seminary in our United States the names and oks of these now old men—Barth, Brunner, Kit-, Nygren, Aulén, Dibelius, *et al.*—are common-ces. Supposedly, for these many years past, all nerican seminary teachers have been stimulated Barth, Brunner and others to a newer and deeper preciation of the basic New Testament gospel as terpreted by Paul the Apostle, by early church hers such as Augustine and by 16th century re-mers such as Luther and Calvin. Supposedly so, every American Protestant pastor who has aduated from a theological seminary in the last neration has been influenced in some measure by hat we call our current theological recovery.

When you ask, however, about the influence of is newer theology and the newer biblical theology the pulpits of our churches, you ask a rather barrassing question. I noted very little evidence the influence of recent theological, biblical or hical studies in the preaching I heard this sum-er. The academic, theological, biblical and ethical inking seems to remain on campus. It does not go t into the churches in any very profound way. ow this is really a trite observation and we have l known for some time that American neo-ortho-oxy, as this recent theological recovery is called, s been for the most part an academic growth ourishing best in our seminaries and college reli-on departments. Neo-orthodoxy has not been very uitful in the American churches on the congrega-ional and pastoral level. That we all know and gree upon. What we in the academic world have ot seen, or have been unwilling to acknowledge, is hat our so-called theological, biblical and ethical enewal has proved sterile in the churches largely ecause it has been too sophisticated to deal with ractical problems except in the realm of social re-orm by way of secular political action. The life nd work of the average pastor and his mine-run, iddle-class congregation have seemed like a pretty rubby scene for the operation of an academic mind.

The thrill of discussing international politics, the xcitement of American politics, the sense of being ell-informed and rightly aligned which comes from ssociation with this or that social, political or eco-omic action group have given the American profes-or of recent years a sense of belonging and a con-ciousness of status in the American community hich the usual academic did not have a generation go. The American theological professor of the neo-orthodox variety has been caught up in this new involvement, and in this new sense of status in the American social and political scene in a way and to a degree unequaled since the great debates over slavery in the 1830's and 1840's. But now, as also then, one result has been that the theological professor has found it increasingly difficult to identify himself in any deep way with the problems of the average pastor in an average church. In the European scene, in Germany, Switzerland and Scandinavia especially, a similar neo-orthodox theological recovery led by Barth, Brunner, Nygren, *et al.*, has had its political action side, especially during the days of the conflict between the German churches and the Nazi Party. But the leaders of European neo-orthodoxy, Barth, Brunner and many others, have also been deeply involved in the very practical life of the church, its preaching, its pastoral work, its liturgical forms, its catechetical work and so on. American neo-orthodoxy has not had this same practical concern with the ongoing life of the church. Its eyes and hands have been rather upon civic, social and educational institutions, and its hopes of renewal have been pinned more upon the intellectual and political leaders of our time than upon the American churches. Consequently it has not addressed itself adequately to the task of making plain just what its theological insights mean to the average Christian in an average congregation. The pastor or seminary student may readily enough learn how to debate with other scholars the relative merits of the theologies of Brunner and of Tillich, or of R. N. Niebuhr and of H. R. Niebuhr, but once he gets caught in the life of a typical American congregation, "Madison Avenue" and "Collegiate Marble" soon capture him.

What we now call the American neo-orthodox theological recovery has been largely an analytical movement which by analyzing the crisis of Western man in our time came slowly and hesitatingly to relinquish the rather utopian and optimistic views of the Social Gospel theology and to adopt, in part, the older, traditional or "orthodox" confession that man was at heart a sinner, and was in the midst of a society so self-centered that it could not resolve its own inner tensions and conflicts. American neo-orthodoxy has elaborated at great extent and depth the predicament of modern man, the crisis of our time, the hollowness of modern religiosity, the tensions of class, race, national and private interest, and the hidden fears and inner contradictions of men's souls. But it has been unable to say much about the salvation of man or of society.

For fear of falling into the arms of Billy Graham's choir, or into the ecstatic company of the pacifists, or into the easy simplicities of the older Liberalism, American neo-orthodoxy has settled for a redemption which is supra-historical, for an incarnation which is a symbol and for a resurrection which is beyond history. The mistakes of the older Liberalism and the Social Gospel, and the mistakes of the older Conservativism and Fundamentalism, have made it exceedingly hard for neo-orthodoxy to commit itself to any very clear statement about what the Christian gospel, the Good News of salvation in

Christ, means to men now living. The American pastor, therefore, once he is liberated from a theological seminary, can soon agree readily enough with his neo-orthodox professors that what General Sherman said about war is true of the life of his parishioners, and of his own life among them. But the very nature of his role as a Christian pastor, and his very right concern to help his people find some kind and degree of salvation in and through the gospel are very apt to lead the pastor down the primrose path to the spurious salvations of peace-of-mind, religion-will-work-for-you and all the rest. It may be deplorable but it ought not to be surprising that these spurious salvations sweep over our churches and their pastors. That is about the only form of salvation which is being offered in the name of Jesus Christ in our evil time.

I do not know in what frame of mind you came to seminary. I do know how our class came. We came to get a lead-covered charge of something or other which we could store away and which would burn slowly over the next forty years, providing steam and light enough to help us run good churches. It was as simple as that, except for the incredible stupidity and woodenness of the faculty who had other ideas. One of my best friends in seminary had it down really "pat," and he had it almost in writing from his pastor (who was famous from coast to coast). The parting advice of this pastor to him had been, "Go on . . . , do a good job up there at seminary. But don't worry too much about all their stuff. Then when you get ready to take a church, buy yourself a couple of good encyclopedias. They'll give you all the real information you need. Then subscribe to the magazines which most of your people read. That will give you an idea of what they are thinking about, and how they look at things. After that, just good common sense will tell you how to work." Well, if that's it, nearly three hundred of you are going to be cheated this winter in an unmerciful manner—even though what you lose may be only your wives' money.

During regular classes in seminary, prophecies of the future are definitely *nefas* and even *déclassé*. But, before and after work, at convocation time or commencement time, prophecies are respectable. You are entering seminary at a time when the American church in general is enjoying the greatest degree of approval and acceptance which it has known in this century—and in some respects, since the Civil War. Yet it is more than likely, it is even quite certain, that during your years in the ministry, that is, during the balance of this 20th century, you will find yourself ministering in a church which will look back upon these days with incredulity or perhaps even with bitterness. Decisions, actions, changes which in these halcyon days can be avoided will not forever rest in peace, however softly our candles burn and however sweetly our choirs sing. I am afraid that our generation is going to hand on to your generation an unsolved spiritual crisis within the church, a crisis which at bottom is rootlessness—a lack of roots beneath the large institutional church which you will inherit. If you expect to walk into that inheritance and sit down to rest, it may very well collapse with you. If, the other hand, you take the church as you find it—or, more truthfully, if you face up to w we the church now are—and take that insight the beginning of a better and farther-reach ministry, the God of redemption, who is by t token also the God of history, will be with you.

Those of you who have made any study of h human thought changes from generation to gene tion know that very seldom does any one generat make more than one drastic change of opinion, o look or orientation. A few individuals may do from time to time but not often will a whole gene tion make more than one such basic change. As y read books, as you listen to lectures and as y take part in scheduled and in nonscheduled disc sions, you will come quickly to see where the lim of the explored areas of Christian thought and l now lie. Beyond those limits the territory is you You can profit much if you will, from what has be learned by those who have explored the now kno areas, whether it be those who did so only la week or those who broke the way centuries ag The darker the way ahead or the rougher the sto around us, the greater will be our need of every r source available to us from what can be learn from the experience under God of the past and pre ent church. Long ago in Israel, in Jesus Christ, the Apostles, in the Early Church, in the Reform tion and even in our present time God has ma some things quite plain to those who will recei them. And to try to interpret and to present e fectually the significance of what God has revealed of himself and his will and his ways in the life of h church and his world, is really about all that th seminary seeks to do for you or can do for yo Never forget, however, that when the great da comes and you are delivered from this present aca demic bondage, you will go out to minister in th name of Jesus Christ in an era now unknown to u all, namely, the unknown, unpredictable future. N one can tell you what that day will bring forth o how you will do such and such in that day. Bu Jesus Christ who is the beginning and the endin will be there. And may you be his good servant in that day, whatever it may bring.

At Cradleside

Oh, traveler, dost thou see
The shadow of things to be?
Nail prints in infant hands,
The brow, so lately soothed
By mother's soft caress
One day to wear the thorned crown,
The suckling lips
So soon to taste the gall.

See the future, traveler,
And kneel!
Know the wonder of this hour:
Hush, the symphony of the stars
Declares — God is not finished.

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HARPER & BROTHERS

Words Refract the Light
We Are Trying to Share

When God Speaks

By John W. Meister

JOHN the Evangel uses only five words to describe the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. He omits all reference to Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the star, the royal lineage and the angelic visitations and contents himself with: "And the Word became flesh."

No sentence could be more simple in construction or be composed of more familiar words. Yet no sentence quite matches this one for metaphysical profundity and penetration, for mystery and mysticism, for compression and comprehension of truth. It makes some sense to the most naive and yet the most sophisticated among us cannot totally understand it. Study these words as we will, and meditate upon them a long lifetime—and still we shall have gained only glimpses of the great Unseen. The most the wisest of us can hope for is to *increase* our understanding of them. But to *comprehend* them—never!

The Need for Symbolism

John says that Jesus is God's "Word" in human flesh. This is one man's way to speak about God. This is testimony in time about the nature of the Eternal. This is another effort of the creature to speak about the Creator. This is an attempt of the fraction to describe the One. This is a magnificently puny endeavor of a created man within the circle of time to bear authentic witness about the Eternal God who circumscribed the circle.

Such an endeavor is, in a sense, forever doomed to fail. God defies definition exactly because he is God. If we could draw a descriptive circle around God and say, "This is God," then what we described would not be God but our own creation.

The most we can do is to speak in symbols and say, "God is like this or that." The sentence before us is that kind of effort. John is speaking in a symbol. He has beheld Jesus and in Jesus he has seen God. "Word" is his supreme symbol. Jesus is what God has to say about himself. Jesus is God's ultimate "Word" to the world. In Jesus God has clearly spoken. Therefore John can say, "God is like this: the Word become flesh."

But why should John speak of Jesus as God's "Word"? What is there about the nature of a word which prompts John to select "Word" as a symbol of the eternal in time?

Words Reveal Personality

We are what we say. We cannot separate our speech from our being. We frame our thoughts, design our dreams, protest our love, express our anger, cry for forgiveness, show our sympathy, prove our graciousness—all by means of words or the withholding of words.

But, someone will say, suppose our actions betray our words. Then as before our words reveal our personality. They show up the radical duplicity within our soul. They portray us as dishonest men. They unveil and unmask us as frauds. For our speech is more than the syllables which fall off our tongue. Our speech is the total expression of our complete personality. The equation of speech goes something like this: speech equals what we say plus what we are. In this sense, our words are at the same time our most intimate possession and the world's public property.

So it is with God. *God's speech* is the total revelation of himself. His speech consists of what he shows himself to be. In this sense God is forever speaking. He is the eternal Chatterbox. As John put it, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

In short, all of creation testifies to the personality of God—from the most mammoth star to the tiniest microbe. He speaks in nature, in human history, in the church. But, and this is John's insight: In Jesus the Word of God became flesh! And in flesh he speaks more clearly to man than in a star, atom or a lesson of history. In Jes we mortals behold the glory of God a unique way—as we behold the gl of a father in his son. In Jesus G speaks to us! In our language! Jes is God's Word to us. God may ha another Word for other planets a other creatures, but when we truly s Jesus the soul of the believer comp him to agree with John that Jesus God's Word in our flesh.

I am quite anxious that we glimp this mystery in something other th easy mechanical terms. I often hear re erences to the divinity of Jesus whi amount to: "Jesus was God." Such statement makes Jesus "the same a God or synonymous with God.

Jesus was not God in this sense equating the two. The classic creed have always been careful to avoid th pretension. We come much nearer t truth of the matter if we remember t words of Paul: "God was in Jesus re onciling the world to himself," whic is another way of saying with Joh "In Jesus God was speaking to us."

Wisdom at Work

Perhaps I can interpret this myster somewhat by means of a homely illus tration used by a mother while explain ing to her son that God is "everywher at once." She asked the boy to imagin that his body was the world. Then sh lightly pinched his cheek and arm an leg, asking each time, "Are you there? Then the little fellow said, "Mother, i God is everywhere why wouldn't it hur him to cut a tree as much as to cut a person?" The wise mother asked the boy, "Which would hurt you more: t cut your finger or your fingernail? T cut your hair or your head?" Then she told him that we live in our fingernail as well as in our fingers, and in our hair as well as in our heads, but we do not live in our hair or our fingernails as fully as in other parts of our body.

In some such way God lives in all of his creation—and yet he is more than the totality of his creation. He speaks of himself in flowers plucked from crannied walls, in rocks and rills and tem pled hills, in battles won and lost and some which are never fought, in the humblest peasant and the richest merchant, in mother, teacher, parent, child.

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he speaks his clear and ultimate saving Word to us in Jesus of areth. Words reveal personality. s reveals God's personality. Therefore Jesus is God's Word.

Words Release Power

We frequently say, "Words are cheap." And well we might for (thanks to radio, television, newspapers, magazines and comic books) I suppose no other group of people have ever heard so many words uttered to so little purpose.

Some years ago a preacher I know found himself stranded in a Michigan village between trains. The station master recommended that the high school situation might be a profitable place to spend the time. Once there his eye fell on a banner proclaiming the class motto: "Deeds not words." We know the spirit which prompted the class to choose its motto. It is the same spirit which prompted Paul to remind the Corinthians that "the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power." These students felt like we often feel, that words are cheap and they would rather be up and doing.

But this side of the matter ought not blind us to the other side: Words are the most powerful of tools. And the right word at the right time is precious beyond all price. The stranded preacher saw this other and truer side of the matter. Immediately he found himself thinking:

> But words are deeds — as much as deeds of the lips as the making of a table is a deed of the hands. Did not the Greeks say, "By words alone are mortals swayed"? Words are tools—terrible tools or beneficent tools—but tools. And even words born in the silence of the soul are among earth's mightiest tools—a brush to paint pictures, a chisel to carve motives, a battering ram to break down walls of oppression, a compass to guide the traveler, a light to pierce the soul's gloom.*

But what has this to do with God and Jesus? Just this: When John beheld Jesus he realized that he was beholding the power of God being released through a person. Much as the power latent in a nation is released when the right word is spoken, so the power of God latent in men is released when they behold—truly behold—Jesus. God does not speak the English language, nor any language audible to our ears, but he does speak the human language in the person of Jesus. Jesus is God's Word become flesh! Jesus is what God has to say to the world! Jesus is God's final Word—final in the sense of being intimate. There is nothing more God can say! Jesus is God's speech to man-kind!

But notice that God's Word consists of what Jesus *is* quite as much as of what Jesus *said*. The person of Jesus —what he is, plus the work of Jesus—what he did, plus the words of Jesus—what he said: these three taken together comprise the Word of God become flesh. Which means that if we would hear God in Jesus we must "enter into" Jesus. It is not enough to read his words. We "hear" God's Word in Jesus only when we are "in Christ," saturated with him as an alcoholic is "in liquor" or a man is "in love."

To me the most exciting fact about the conviction that God has spoken in Jesus is this: In Jesus God speaks to *every* human situation.

I once thought that God in Jesus had something to say in only some of the experiences of life. Life, I thought, could be broken down into compartments: some of life I could carry alone; some of life was relevant to Jesus and in those areas I would seek his guidance; and some of life was too much for even God to do anything about! But the longer I live and the more I minister the more convinced I am that God in Jesus has something to say in every human situation and that when we hear what he has to say his word releases power.

Take the grim experience of losing someone in death. We stand beside a grief-stricken friend and we try to release his powers of hope and renewal. I have long since learned that if we try to speak out of our own wisdom and experience our speaking is so much nervous chattering which does more to upset than to build up. But when we help such a one to behold God in Jesus the powers for getting a new grip on life are released. Who, for example, can behold God as these words reveal him and fail to feel the power of hope and new life being released within: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are

*George A. Buttrick, *Jesus Came Preaching* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1931). Used by permission.

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asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so those also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

If we would hear God's Word which releases power then we had best behold him upon the cross. Jesus said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." He is most truly lifted up when he is hanging from the cross. This is the sign of the power God releases through him—the power of self-giving love. As Paul put it, "To us who are being saved the cross is the power of God."

Words release power. Jesus releases God's power. Therefore we can speak of Jesus as God's Word become flesh.

Words Refract Light

Finally, words refract light. By "light" I obviously do not mean physical light such as comes from the sun or an electric bulb. I mean the inner light which we think of as being within ourselves, especially within our minds. In common speech we refer to ignoran "darkness" and to intelligence "light." We have dubbed a perio history the "Age of Enlightenment cause during that period the min many men were "lighted up" in a way. We instinctively think of t in terms of light and are given to ing, "I just can't get him to *see* I'm trying to say." In the same pas where we find the sentence which stimulated this group of meditat John brings "light" and "life" clos meaning the same reality: "In him life, and the life was the light of m What I am suggesting then is this: words refract that inner light wi ourselves which is at once our pers truth and our distinctive life.

But why say words "refract" li Why not say, "Words *reveal* light "Words *reflect* light"? Why reso this rather strange verb, "refract"?

Reveal and Reflect

For this very good and simple r son: Our words do not reveal or ref our own inner light. "Reveal" means take away the veil." If we revea hidden object we pull back the curt for all to see it who will, and presu ably they may see all there is of it. "R flect," on the other hand, means bend." The implication is "to be back whatever goes into." The simpl illustration for our purpose is the m ror or looking glass. A good mirror flects the image of the one who pe into it.

One moment's thought on the mat causes us to realize that our wo neither reveal nor reflect our inn light. Regardless of the precision wi which we select our words we seldom ever completely reveal all that we me or accurately reflect all that we inter There is always something "left ove that we cannot find words to expre This is the reason we so frequently sa "I don't know whether you catch wh I mean or not, but the nearest I c come to saying it is. . . ."

Our communication is always i perfect. Even if we select our wor with utmost care (which we don't), the the words we select mean one thing us and another thing to each pers who hears them. So here we strike profound paradox: If we cannot articu late the light we have—that is, if w cannot put it into words—then we d not really have that light; on the othe hand, regardless of our ability wit words we cannot completely and accu rately articulate the light we really d have. If words do not *reveal* what w mean and do not *reflect* what we mean what do words do? They *refract* th light we are attempting to share.

Breaking Through

The word "refract" means literall "to break." The figure of speech I hav in mind is familiar to every one of us unforgettably familiar if we have ever taken a high school course in begin ning physics. It is the figure of the prism. The typical prism is a long piece of solid glass, the ends of which are tri angular. Almost every home has its

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re of prisms in the crystals which g at the base of chandeliers. If a m is held in such a way that inble light from the sun is permitted pass through it we discover that the m breaks down the invisible light visible light, into its separate visirays so that we see a pattern of t like a rainbow dancing before our s. This process of breaking down light rays and dispersing them into arate colors from red to violet is ed "refraction." The prism refracts t.

Communicating Prism

n something of the same way our rds refract the light within us. They the prism through which we comnicate what we know. Whether the t we own be clear as crystal or hazy a cloud, if we let that light pass ough our words it is broken down o recognizable, if not always underndable, fragments.

The figure of a prism is a good one this added reason: The best of sms will not break down a ray of ht in such a way that we can see *all* its component rays. There is always ch light left unseen. At the one end, example, there are infrared rays too g for us to see, and at the opposite end there are the ultraviolet rays too short for us to see. So it is with our words. However much of the truth we possess words are able to break down into parts we can communicate, there is always much left unspoken because it cannot be said, and unheeded because it cannot be heard.

Our words, then, refract whatever inner light we possess. They break down whatever we know into terms which can be transmitted to others and understood by them. But they never succeed in completely transmitting or accurately interpreting the light that is ours.

In some such way Jesus is the Word of God. Jesus makes God visible because he refracts the light that is God. In his human life Jesus breaks down the invisible light of the Eternal One into particles we can see and understand. Indeed, he breaks down the light that is God into some particles we cannot escape understanding! His life abides as a human rainbow keeping visible the spectrum of God which we are privileged to behold. So that John not only said, "No one has ever seen God"—he rushed right on in the same sentence to add: "the only Son . . . has made him known."

In such measure do we rejoice in the meaning of Christmas: *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father . . . And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace."*

Pulpit Calendar

Dec. 7—2nd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 14—Universal Bible Sunday. 3rd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 21—4th Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 24—Christmas Eve.
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 28—Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.
Jan. 1—New Year's Day.
Jan. 4—2nd Sunday in Christmastide.
Jan. 4-11—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 5—Twelfth Night: Epiphany Eve.
Jan. 6—Epiphany.
Jan. 11—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 18—Missionary Day.
Jan. 18-24—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 25—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 25-Feb. 1—Youth Week.
Feb. 1—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 8—The Transfiguration. Race Relations Sunday.
Feb. 11—Ash Wednesday.
Feb. 13—World Day of Prayer.
Feb. 15—Universal Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 15-22—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 22—2nd Sunday in Lent.

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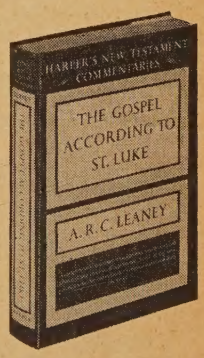

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Book Reviews

TRUTH FOR OUR TIME. *By Geoffrey King. Eerdmans. $2.00.*
WANTING THE IMPOSSIBLE. *By Geo B. Duncan. Eerdmans. $2.00.*

THESE two books, the first i series on the Bible message for time, are edited by Cecil Northc After reading these, one's appetit whetted for the whole series!

Both books are expository prea ing at its very best. Thoroughly bi cal, generously evangelical, th twenty-nine sermons (15 in *Truth Our Time* and 14 in *Wanting the possible*) cover an ample variety Christian teaching. In King's book, emphasis is the message of comm ment to Christ; in Duncan's, the e phasis is victorious Christian liv for the committed Christian.

In *Truth for Our Time* the serm in Chapter 12, "Sickness for the Gl of God" is an excellent treatment divine healing. In *Wanting the Imp sible* the sermon in Chapter 13, "T Discipline of Disappointment" is si ilarly exceptional. Both books a worthy and easy reading, and shou have a wide use among the "seekin laity and the clergy who look for mo els of effective preaching.—*Theoda Pfeiffer, Granada Hills, Calif.*

THEOLOGY IN CONFLICT. *By Gust Wingren. Muhlenberg. $3.25.*

PROFESSOR Wingren of Lund he takes on his mentor, Anders N gren, along with two other giants, Ka Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, askin questions of their anthropology an their hermeneutics (approach to scri tural interpretation). Whether this the most fruitful way to approach the writers is a question open to seriou misgiving. The chapter on Bultmann anthropology is the best on that sub ject; the section on hermeneutics more helpful. It does get nearer th basic question associated with each Nygren with his motif-research Barth's theology of the Word, Bult mann's demythologizing. The las chapter reveals that Wingren is himsel modest about the scope of what he ha set out to do, although the rest of th book creates different illusions. In gen eral, Wingren accuses the others o various forms of deviation from th historic biblical witness. He argues fo separation between historical and sys tematic functions in theology, and criti icizes the great theologians for blurrin these, or slighting one or the other. The Lutheran Law/Gospel distinction i Wingren's tool for analysis. The boo will cause one to explore further the three theologies involved; it should no be used as first introduction to any o them.—*M.E.M.*

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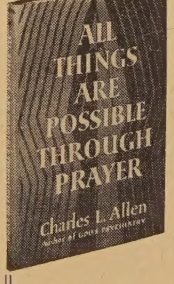

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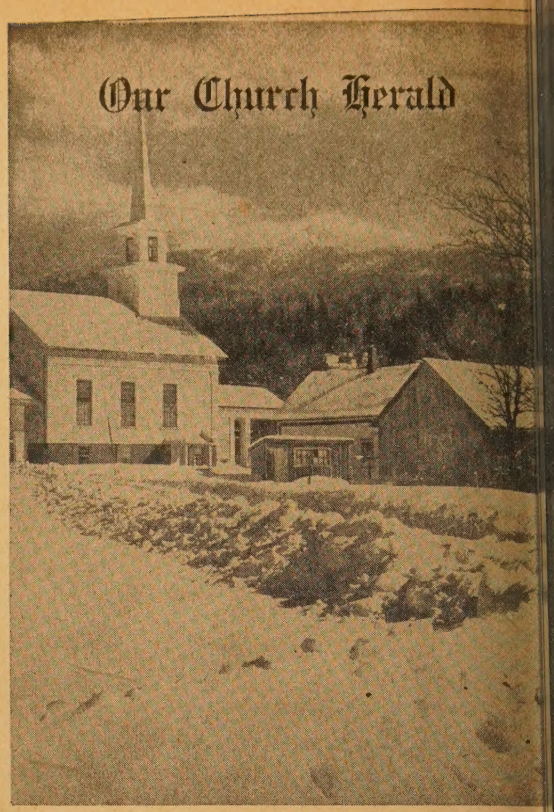

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